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August 25, 1980

Hon. Edmund Muskie
Secretary of State
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Muskie:

I want to add my voice to those many who have undoubtedly already spoken to you of their concern about the fate of Korea's great political leader, Mr. Kim Dae Jung. When I was in South Korea in 1975 I had the pleasure of meeting with Kim Dae Jung at length, learning in detail of his plight and of his vision of a liberal democratic destiny for his country. He deeply impressed me at the time as a courageous patriot who had a constructive sense about Korea's future, which included a continuing positive relationship with the United States.

I know that the United States Government has expressed already its concern about Kim Dae Jung, but I write now, at the urging of influential Japanese friends, to underscore the gravity of the situation. My friends feel that not only is Kim Dae Jung's life in jeopardy, but the whole prospect of a stable, peaceful Korean peninsula is in danger. Of course, their personal concern for Kim Dae Jung's well-being may dramatize their fears, but I believe it is essential that United States foreign policy be alert, amid all of its other preoccupations, to this explosive, potentially damaging situation that is unfolding in Korea in the aftermath of Park Chung Hee's assassination.

It is my conviction that the more continuing evidence of concern the better, no matter what the leadership in Seoul says in public. My principal reason for writing at this time is to encourage this concern.

My best wishes,

Sincerely,

Richard A. Falk

Richard A. Falk

RAF:jg

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